

welfare reform after years of hearing the other side defend a system that everybody knew was broken, again after ignoring the other side cry "extremism" at every opportunity. And a Republican-led Congress reformed Medicare for the first time ever, something that should have been done a long time ago, so that our seniors would be able to retire with peace of mind.

□ 1015

I think the American people are right. It is not extremist, but responsible good government.

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A REPUBLICAN CONGRESS HAS MADE

(Mr. GUTKNECHT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GUTKNECHT. Mr. Speaker, let us look back at where we were just four short years ago.

Deficits were headed up to \$300 billion. Millions of Americans were being trapped in a welfare cycle. Medicare was headed towards bankruptcy, and that was threatening seniors' health care. Billions were being wasted on Washington programs that were unnecessary or ineffective. Interest rates were too high, and our economy was teetering, and taxes on families were going up and up and up.

Mr. Speaker, let us look at where we are today.

Deficits no longer exist. We have balanced the budget. We have taken 2 million families off of welfare rolls and put them on payrolls. Medicare is solvent. Three hundred programs have been eliminated here in Washington. Interest rates have dropped by over 2 percent, and taxes on families is going down.

Mr. Speaker, what a difference a Republican Congress has made.

WE MUST HAVE SCHOOL MODERNIZATION AND QUALITY EDUCATION

(Mr. LAMPSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LAMPSON. Mr. Speaker, I did not intend to come here this morning and deliver a message, but in following the discussion that we have had on education in the last several days, particularly really for a lifetime as being a former teacher, I saw the opportunity now that we are going to have in improving our classrooms certainly by increasing the number of teachers, and it brought a story to mind that happened to me in 1970 when I was transferred to one of the high schools in which I taught.

Within the first week, as I tried to raise the blinds of one of the windows, the window shade fell off the wall and cut my face on my cheek. I noticed that 2 weeks later when it began to rain the walls leaked, the roofs leaked,

and water ran down the side of the walls, and the children had to be evacuated from some of the classrooms in which they were.

I could not teach. The children were there to learn, but they were so distracted by their surroundings that they were not focused.

We have to give our children an opportunity for a better future, and that is going to be through a quality education. We know we are going to have more teachers now. That is going to be in this budget. Thank goodness for that. Now we need the classrooms to put them in, good, quality classrooms to do it.

Mr. Speaker, we must have school modernization. We must pass that in this particular bill in this Congress now. Let us do it before we leave.

FROM DEFICITS TO SURPLUSES—WHAT THE VOTERS SHOULD REMEMBER WHEN THEY GO TO THE POLLS

(Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, late last night the Republican Congress and the Democrat President arrived at an agreement on the Nation's spending plan.

Now our disagreement up to this time has delayed our adjournment by 6 days now. What were we arguing about, one might ask. Well, Mr. Speaker, we were debating the merits of spending a budget surplus.

Now before we get on to details of the spending, let us talk about this surplus. See, Mr. Speaker, were it not for the Republican Congress, we would still be debating the travesties of deficit spending. But today we are not. And that is what Americans should keep in mind. From deficits to surpluses, from runaway spending to lower spending, from higher taxes to lower taxes, from bondage to liberty. That is what happened when control of this Congress went from Democrat to Republican, and that is what voters should remember when they go next month from their homes to the polls.

CONGRESS' UNFINISHED BUSINESS

(Mr. WYNN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WYNN. Mr. Speaker, good morning. I would like to talk about Congress' unfinished business.

My colleagues on the other side rattle when we say it has been a do-nothing Congress, but it has been. We really have not addressed the big issues, the concerns that people in America want to see resolved by Congress. They have failed to achieve anything on tobacco reform. Thousands of our young people will die as a result. They have failed to do anything about HMO reform. Pa-

tient after patient, seniors across the spectrum, have said we need to reform HMOs to give patients a bill of rights. The Republicans have not delivered they fail to achieve. We know the biggest problem facing our country is Social Security. What are we going to do about it? Again, this do-nothing Congress, these under-achievers, have failed to address the real problem. We need to save the surplus and put it into saving Social Security. They want to give an election year tax break. It is a gimmick.

But most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I think they fail to address the problem of our future in terms of education and school construction. We need modern classrooms, we need to invest in education, we need to solve the overcrowding problem, and they have not done it.

TWO CRITICAL ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED

(Mr. GEJDENSON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEJDENSON. Mr. Speaker, the President and the people of this country have forced this do-nothing Congress to take some actions, and we have begun a process of dealing with issues they have avoided for 2 years. But there are two critical issues that still are not addressed.

One is fixing the pensions of people in our Armed Services to make sure that they get a decent retirement so we can keep quality people in the Armed Services. The second affects almost every American, and that is HMO reform.

Mr. Speaker, seniors are losing their HMOs as they hop from city to city trying to get only healthy seniors. Every citizen who has to deal with their doctor or hospital is frightened that their HMO will not pay the bill or will not allow them to get service. Hospitals and doctors and patients are being run by people who have never seen the patient and never seen the inside of a medical facility. These people are in danger physically.

This Republican Congress has to address these two issues. There are others, but certainly the life and death of our constituents, the viability of our hospitals, is something we ought not to be able to ignore.

THIS IS NOT A DO-NOTHING CONGRESS

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, I am often amused when I hear Democrats say this is a do-nothing Congress. What they mean is we have done nothing towards increasing the taxes, we have done nothing towards increasing the size of government, and then nothing to further destroy the American dream which they seem to be so intent on.

What we have done though is pass the first tax cut in 16 years, we have balanced the budget for the first time since 1969 when Woodstock was at Max Yasgur's farm, and Mod Squad was on TV, and Neil Armstrong was on the moon. We have reformed Medicare on a bipartisan basis. We have reformed welfare, and almost 40 percent of the people on welfare have gotten off it in the last 3 years. What have we done in this budget agreement? Strong drug interdiction, strong prevention and rehabilitation programs. What have we done for education? We have returned more dollars and more power and more flexibility to the local level where the teacher in the classroom gets most of the money, where the teacher in the classroom can make most of the decisions, where the teacher in the classroom can call the shots on how to teach Johnnie to read and how to teach Susie to read because they might be a little bit different in Georgia than they are in California or New York.

These are important steps. This is not a do-nothing Congress.

THE HIT-AND-RUN CONGRESS

(Ms. DELAURO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. DELAURO. Mr. Speaker, this Republican controlled Congress has failed, and it has wasted the American people's time. Let me just say that what they have not done is they have accomplished less than a Congress typically does across a 2-year period. On specific issues, they made no progress on making sure that Social Security and Medicare were preserved for future generations. They did not change the way, in fact, we run our campaigns and the amount of money that is raised in those campaigns, and they have done nothing about protecting patients' rights and managed care reform.

Last night they caved under the President's pressure, Democrats' pressure, to allow 100,000 new teachers to go into our schools in grades 1 through 3 to help our children, and yet today they take pride and view it as a victory that they did not want to move on modernizing our schools, to wire up our schools so that kids can get the opportunity to be on an Internet, so they can in fact be able to compete in the future. They view that as a badge of honor.

Quite frankly, this is a Congress that has done a hit and run on the American people.

DO-NOTHING CONGRESS? I DO NOT THINK SO

(Mr. RIGGS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, good morning. As my colleagues know, I guess this partisan debate really boils down

to whether we want to see the glass as half empty or half full, and it is too reminiscent of I think the all too common American mindset of what have you done for me lately. The do-nothing charge though does not stand up to scrutiny because this is the Congress that balanced the budget and passed major tax relief for working Americans for the first time in a generation. We have fundamentally, as earlier speakers have pointed out changed, the debate in Washington, and we can take pride not in being the do-nothing Congress, but in being the surplus Congress.

We have also reigned in the IRS through real reform of the IRS, shifting the burden of proof from taxpayers to the IRS in legal proceedings, and we put Medicare, the health insurance program for older Americans, on solvent solid footing.

Do-nothing Congress? I do not think so. The glass is half full and only getting better as the Republican majority grows in Congress and in the country.

WE DO NOTHING TO HARM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

(Mr. GEKAS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GEKAS. Mr. Speaker, do-nothing indeed. Members forget that just about a month ago the President of the United States signed into law a little recognized bill that we had been working on for about 2 or 3 years, the Bio Materials Access bill. This provides a steady flow of vital materials to people who need medical devices like hip replacements, and heart shunts and brain shunts. That was a bill that this do-nothing Congress put into place and attacked the problems of health care, prevention of disease and products liability all in one bill. The President signed it right after we promoted it and passed it into law.

Do-nothing indeed. That is a slander to say something like that.

At the same time we passed an IRS reform bill that the American people by 90 to 10 advocated, supported and applauded when it finally became law.

Do-nothing indeed. We will do nothing to harm the American people. We will do nothing to harm Social Security. We will do nothing to harm the prospects of a steady economy in the near and far future. That is what we are, we do something.

□ 1030

TAKING CREDIT FOR BALANCING THE BUDGET

(Mr. PAYNE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, let me take a minute to look at this question of a balanced budget. We hear our Re-

publican colleagues talk with pride about the fact that they passed a balanced budget and we have a surplus.

Let us go back five short years ago when there was a bill in 1993 before this House. The bill said let us cut \$250 billion of programs, and let us increase \$250 billion of taxes on the top 2 percent of Americans. Ninety-eight percent of the Americans were exempt from that tax increase.

At that time, not one single Republican vote was cast for that plan that President Clinton gave to the American people. It was passed overwhelmingly by Democrats, without one single Republican vote, a \$500 billion process that put us on the target now where we have over 16 million new jobs, a \$70 billion surplus and many other positive things. We did it, not them.

FOREIGN AID BUDGET

(Mr. CALLAHAN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CALLAHAN. Mr. Speaker, sometimes it is amazing to me the memory of some of our colleagues about we did nothing this year.

One of my responsibilities in the House is to Chair the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs, how much money we are going to give the President for foreign aid. It is not a pleasant job.

But just to remind my colleagues, we did our job. The President wanted \$13.5 billion. We did our job, but we would not give him all he wanted. We passed the bill through the House, we passed it through all the committees, we passed it through the Senate, but the President said, "There is no sense in sending it down here, because I will veto it if you do not give me another \$1 billion."

Well, we felt like we had better things to do with that \$1 billion. But the President said no, and there we were faced with the possibility of shutting the government down or giving him his \$1 billion.

So it was not that we did not do our job, because we did everything we were supposed to do, except the President refused to sign the bill, telling us that unless we gave \$1 billion more, that he was going to shut the government down.

BLOCKING DOLLARS FOR THE CLASSROOMS

(Mr. OWENS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. OWENS. Mr. Speaker, the Republicans are standing in the schoolhouse door and they refuse to allow Federal dollars to build classrooms or to modernize and renovate classrooms. The Republicans are blocking dollars for the classrooms. They have a bill called